# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) own and are responsible for the operation of the Avi Suquilla Airport, which serves the aviation needs of the Town of Parker and surrounding communities in La Paz County, Arizona. This report presents the planning team's comprehensive evaluation of the existing Airport facility and identifies solutions which are designed to meet the needs of the greater Parker area. study area and inventory detail presents the existing Airport as the basis for later analysis. A comprehensive forecast section discusses the potential for future growth in general aviation and passenger traffic. Demand/capacity and facility requirements are developed in terms of existing facility capacities, forecast future demand versus potential deficiencies, and proposed solutions to these deficiences. Alternatives are evaluated to determine the best method of development and/or improvement and the environmental analysis investigates the environmental impact as a result of proposed or selected actions. Land Use Plan suggests land uses that are compatible with existing and future Airport operations and the Airport plans depict graphically the proposed improvements which are a result of the overall study, while the financial analysis determines the costs and identifies methods of financing the proposed improvements.

## 1.1 THE ROLE OF THE AIRPORT

With the development of the aviation industry, airports have become an equally important partner in the nation's overall transportation network. An airport potentially links the community with the entire world, thus creating special opportunities for economic wealth and a high quality of life. In this regard, airports attract industry and trade, generate employment, provide revenues, and therefore have a substantial economic impact on the communities they serve. Airports also have an impact on urban development plans because of the land they require, the access they need, and the restrictions they impose in terms of obstruction clearance and zoning compatibility. The airport, although

an entity in and of itself, is an integral part of a community's transportation system and its urban development plans. Therefore, planned airport improvements must be in harmony with planned community development. The airport (and urban) planning process must ensure that all operating elements are kept in balance and are capable of development in phase with expected future growth without unnecessary expenditure.

## 1.2 THE PLANNING PROCESS

Before any development or improvements are implemented, certain fundamental planning criteria must be established which evaluate a particular airport's purpose in the aviation system, its capacity and operational characteristics, and its physical size and location. After these fundamentals have been identified, possible alternatives are then developed and analyzed to determine the optimum solution which integrates all aspects of the airport into the most efficient total operating system. Efficiency is measured against a variety of different parameters depending upon the nature of the facility, but always includes costs whether they be monetary, social, or environmental. This stage of the analysis is the planning element which is an essential prerequisite to any design.

Planning airports involves the same methods and approaches as planning any major facility. It is a process which requires a logical deductive analysis of requirements and a thorough evaluation of basic constraints. The most efficient plan for the airport as a whole is that which accommodates the area's basic aviation needs with optimum operational convenience and safety, while achieving the lowest possible capital and operating costs. At the same time, CRIT has the obligation to integrate the Airport into the general environment with the least disruption to social life and the natural environmental and ecological conditions. Air transportation is a valuable commodity; however, the costs of such a commodity should not outweigh its benefits.

This project updates the Master Plan developed by R.B. Williams & Associates, Inc. in 1980. It reflects the changes that have occurred over the past 5 years in the economic and regulatory environment and in the perceived needs of the community. To ensure that local interests and points of view are incorporated into this project, the work has been carried out in collaboration with an Airport Advisory Committee whose members represent a variety of community interests.

#### 1.3 GENERAL BACKGROUND

In 1980, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provided matching funds (Grant Program No. A-04-0026-01) to the Town of Parker, Arizona, in support of the development of a comprehensive airport master plan for Parker Municipal Airport. At that time, management and operation of the Airport was the responsibility of the Town of Parker. However, in 1982, ownership and operational responsibility reverted back to CRIT and the Airport became officially known as Avi Suquilla Airport. In September 1984, CRIT secured the services of Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc. and Reynolds, Smith and Hills, Inc. (ESE/RS&H) to update the 1980 Master Plan and to prepare appropriate applications for federal assistance in regard to future capital improvements. In support of the 1980 Master Plan Update, the FAA has provided matching funds under Grant No. 3-04-0026-01.

Since the last planning effort in 1980, many changes have occurred in the economy, the aviation industry, and the levels of activity at Avi Suquilla Airport. This report reasesses the Airport's role in the community and in the national system of airports.

## 1.4 PURPOSE

The purpose of this master plan study is to examine the existing and future role of Avi Suquilla Airport relative to the aviation needs of CRIT, the Town of Parker, and La Paz County, and to establish a plan for facility development which will ensure the Airport's ability to

accommodate these needs throughout the planning period. To achieve this purpose, it is important that such a study be conducted in accordance with local and regional policies, goals, and objectives.

Many local goals and objectives must be satisfied to obtain the necessary financial support to implement any segment of an airport's capital improvement program. Some goals and objectives will differ in importance to various segments of the population, and to the individuals responsible for making decisions which affect the citizenry of the parker area. It is important, however, to be able to identify and prioritize the various goals and objectives and determine the alternatives which will satisfy them. This aspect of the planning process requires that the planning effort be based on a continually changing framework through which the goals and objectives can be updated throughout the process as the alternatives materialize. To this end the following goals and objectives are established to provide guidance in the initial stages of the planning effort.

#### 1.5 PROJECT GOALS

The initial goals and objectives of the master plan for Avi Suquilla Airport were informally developed before any evaluation of existing or alternative scenarios were conducted. The primary goals of this master plan are:

- Determine the improvements necessary to accommodate existing and future aviation needs of CRIT, the Town of Parker, and La Paz County.
- Address any short-range planning needs to optimize any funding opportunities for the short-term; and
- Provide CRIT with a set of planning options concerning the long-range requirements needed to meet projected aviation demand.

#### 1.6 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To meet these primary goals, a set of objectives were developed. CRIT will use these objectives to evaluate the alternatives for appropriateness. Project objectives are to:

- I. Identify airside, landside, and airspace improvements by planning stage, as well as by threshold level, that are required to meet the anticipated demand levels;
- Establish an implementation schedule for immediate and shortterm airport improvements to enhance the safety and use of the airport that will not forestall future planning options;
- 3. Quantify the economic impact of the Airport on the Town of Parker and the Colorado River Indian Reservation; and
- 4. Address major environmental issues that are directly related to the continued development of Avi Suquilla Airport with an evaluation of viable alternatives/solutions.

As a result of the establishment of the preliminary goals and objectives, this master plan will provide the framework from which CRIT will
be able to address the future role of the Airport in the Arizona State
Airport System Plan.